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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY USSR/Iran

REPORT

SUBJECT Soviet Activities Along the Northwest
Iranian Border

DATE DISTR. 17 November 1959

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report concerning activity along the
Iranian/Soviet border area during the period 21 January through 24 March 1959

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2. Activities described in this report include military training exercises, routine activities of Soviet troops along the border, and movement of vehicles, trains and aircraft. The following items are of particular interest:

- a. In addition to the usual 13-car train which arrived daily in Soviet Astara N 38-20, E 48-52, other trains arrived on the following days:

- (1) 23 January - an unspecified number of trains, each with five freight car
- (2) 27 January - one train with five freight cars;
- (3) 13 March - one train with five freight cars;
- (4) 14 March - one train with seven freight cars.

- b. From 2200 hours on 6 February until 0900 hours on 7 February, four pairs of ships (sic) were at sea at the mouth of the river Astara Chay? opposite the Iranian post of Heydarmahaleh. About 20 persons were on patrol duty inside the barbed wire fence of the Soviet post?. This activity was unprecedented.

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[REDACTED]

Military Information from Astara Border Guards, in the year 1958-59

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1. [REDACTED] from 5:00 hours to 16:30
^{Kapchimagla}
about 30 armed soldiers with one officer were near Soviet ~~Qapchimahaleh~~ get-
ting operational training. At 18:00 hours three covered trucks arrived from
Soviet Astara. At 18:05 45 armed soldiers were seen in column of one (single
^{Kapchimagla}
file) left ~~Qapchimahaleh~~ post going to Soviet Astara. At 18:30 thirty of
them returned to the post in single file. Date: Jan. 21, 1959.
2. At 9:30 a communication plane flew at the border. Ship was anchored and
train passed as usual. Date: Jan 22, 1959.
3. At 13:30 a communication plane flew at the border. A ship was anchored and
some boats were fishing. In addition to the regular daily train (missing
phrase) each came with five freight cars; from 9:30 to 17:10. Jan. 23, 1959.
4. [REDACTED] flight of one communication plane, anchorage of a ship
a number of boats fishing, regular normal train. Jan. 24, 1959. 50X1-HUM
5. At 10:15 two trucks with 15 soldiers in them went from Alasha post to
Soviet Qermezi Post. From 8:00 to 17:00 hours there was shooting at the north
of Astara and shooting was by machine gun fire. Jan. 26, 1959.
6. From 15:10 to 16:30 twenty armed soldiers and an officer were at a point
^{Kapchimagla} in of
near ~~Qapchimahaleh~~ practice military operations. At 17:40 twenty soldiers that
were not armed returned from that post to Soviet Astara by a truck. In addition
to the regular daily train another with five freight cars arrived at Astara
at 17 ;30 hours. Jan. 27, 1959.
7. On Jan. 30, 1959. from 12:00 hours to 16:00 hours there was mortar fire in
the area north of Soviet Alasha post.

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8. On Feb. 1, 1959. at 13:10 hours a truck load of 14 soldiers and four offic-
^{Kapchimagla}
ers, 17 soldiers came to the ~~Qapchimahaleh~~ opposite of ^{Khoashgeh - Dananeh} ~~Khooshkedahaneh~~ of Iran
and returned to their posts after an hours of practice. STAT

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9. In his personal inspection visit the Border Guards officer of Astara noted that all traffic passing in front of Soviet posts even though they are non military are fully inspected by the Soviet posts. Feb. 2, 1959.

10. At 13:30 a communications plane flew west to east. From 9:00 to 17:00 hours there was shooting by machine gun at the Soviet post of Alasha. At 16:20 hours twenty Soviet soldiers came to ^{Kapchimaqla} ~~Qapchimaqla~~ post from Astara mounted on horse cart. From 22:00 hours to 9:00 hours four pairs of ships were at the sea opposite the river mouth opposite of Heydarnahaleh post of Iran. About twenty persons were on patrol duty inside the barbed wire stretch. This is an action unprecedented. At 9:40 of this day four officers of whom two were combat unit officers and two from border guards came to the border bridge and having stayed there for a few minutes returned. At 10:30 hours all of the soldiers and those on patrol returned to the Border Guards. Feb. 7.

11. According to the report of Astara Border Guards from 8:00 hours to 15:00 hours machine gun fire was noted and also rocket fire was noted from 19:00 to 21:00 hours in the region between Alasha and ^{Bagchesera} ~~Bagchesera~~ post of the Soviets. Feb. 4, 1959.

12. A Soviet monoplane, single engined flew at 15:10 and a communications biplane flew west to east at 16:20 hours. Trains and other observations were normal. Feb. 5, 1959.

13. A communications plane flew at 18:00 hours east from west. Ship was anchored and trains were normal. Feb. 7, 1959.

14. A communications biplane flew at 7:50 and another flew at 15:05 from ^{LenKoran} ~~LenKoran~~ towards Soviet Astara. These returned to ^{LenKoran} ~~LenKoran~~. Feb. 14, 1959.

15. A communications biplane flew at 8:50 from ^{LenKoran} ~~LenKoran~~ to Soviet Astara and returned. Feb. 15, 1959.

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16. A communications plane (biplane) flew at 7:00 hours from ~~Lankaran~~ ^{Lenkoran} to Astara and flew back. Feb. 16, 1959.

17. At 13:40 hours a helicopter flew from ~~Lankaran~~ ^{Lenkoran} to Soviet Astara and returned. A communications biplane flew at 15:00 hours west to east. From 22:00 hours to 9:30 there was machine gun fire and from 9:30 to 10:00 hours there was machine gun fire with colored rockets at the Soviet ^{Astara} Fisheries field .

Date: Feb. 18, 1959.

18. Two Soviet biplanes flew from west to east one at 14:45 hours and the other at 15:30 hours. A Ship was anchored at sea and train passed as usual. From 10:00 to 12:00 hours there was machine gun fire at Astara shooting range. Feb. 19, 1959.

19. A ship was anchored at sea and train passed as usual. Feb. 21, 1959.

20. A Soviet communications plane flew west to east at 17:00 hours. Ship was anchored at sea and train passed as usual. Feb. 21, 1959.

21. A Soviet communications biplane flew west to east at 6:35. Ship was anchored and train passed as usual. Feb. 22, 1959.

22. A Soviet communications biplane flew at 17:20 from west to east. At 22:00 hours threemortar gun shells were heard together with some rocket flares fired north of Soviet Astara. Trains were normal. Feb. 23, 1959.

23. Soviet ship was anchored at sea. At 17:20 six border guards officers came to the border bridge for inspection. Trains passed as usual. Feb. 24, 1959.

24. A ship was anchored at sea and trains were normal. Feb. 25, 1959.

25. A Soviet communications biplane flew at 15:00 hours from west to east. Ship was anchored at sea. Feb. 26, 1959.

26. Soviet communicati east at 9:30 hours. Ship was anchored and trains were normal. From 2:00 to 4:00 hours there were six

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soldiers and from 3:00 to 6:00 hours there were 30 fisherman all fishing at Astara ^{Chay}Chai river mouth using torchlights. Feb. 27, 1959.

27. At 9:30 sixteen armed soldiers carrying packs accompanied by an officer were seen walking from ^{Kapchimaqla}Gapchimaqla towards Soviet Astara. At 10:12 a truck load of eight armed soldiers were seen moving in the same direction. From 8:00 to 12:00 hours there was shooting with machine gun north of Soviet Astara. A ship was anchored at sea. Trains passed as usual. From 1:30 hours to 2:15 ~~Hrs.~~ thirty armed Soviet soldiers were getting training near the border bridge post. They returned to the Border Guards after a white flare rocket was fired. Feb 28, 1959.

28. At 13:15 of March 1, 1959 a helicopter which was colored army Khaki, and had number 4 painted on it with a red star on the fuselage flew to Soviet Astara from ^{Lenkoyan}Lankaran and landed at Astara. It took off at 13:30 hours. It is learned that the road from ^{Lenkoyan}Lankaran to Astara was blocked the helicopter came to pick up a patient. 13 cars, one locomotive, 5 freight cars arrived at 11:45 at Soviet Astara. Ship was anchored at sea.

29. A Soviet single engined biplane flew west to east at 7:10. Ship was anchored at sea. Locomotive with 13 cars arrived at 10:30 and returned to ^{Lenkoyan}Lankaran at 18:15. March 2, 1959.

30- Two ships were anchored at a point north of Soviet Astara. From 20:30 to 24:00 hours about 41 guns were fired at a point north of Soviet Astara. Train came as usual bringing 13 cars. March 3, 1959.

31. A Soviet single-engined biplane flew at 17:00 hours west to east. At 15:15 a truck with 20 armed soldiers in it arrived at Soviet Astara coming from the Soviet post of ~~Alacha~~. Arrival and departure of train was as usual and in the number that comes daily, 13 cars. March 4, 1959.

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32. On March 5, 1959, there was a ship anchored at sea. 15 Soviet fishermen were at work at Astara river mouth from 19:30 till morning. Trains were 13 cars.

33. From 3:30 to 19:00 hours report of burst which sounded like gun shell were heard from a far distant point apparently close to ^{Lenkovan} ~~Lenkaran~~. Ship was anchored and trains arrived as usual. March 6, 1959.

8:50 a

34. March 7, 1959. Ship was anchored at sea. At ^{Lenkovan} ~~Lenkaran~~ locomotive and five cars left ^{*} for in addition to the regular daily train of 13 cars. It returned at 17:50.

35. March 8, 1959. Ship was anchored at sea. Trains arrival as usual. From 20:45 to 7:00 hours of this day there were 20 Soviet fishermen at Astara Chay fishing.

36. March 9, 1959. Ship was anchored at sea. The daily 13 car train arrived and left. From 20:00 hours to 7:00 hours 20 Soviet fishermen were fishing at Astara Chay river mouth.

37. March 10, 1959. Ship was anchored at sea. At 16:30 five border guard Soviet officers came to the opposite bridge and watched the river and Iranian side for a few minutes and went back to the Border Guards office. Two unarmed soldiers who had black uniforms came to the bridge and then went back after half an hour to the post.

38. March 11, 1959. A biplane single engined Soviet plane flew from west to east at 12:35. Ship was anchored and train arrived and departed as usual.

39. March 12, 1959. Ship was anchored and train arrived and departed as usual.

40. March 13, 1959. A Soviet single engined biplane flew west to east at 7:10.

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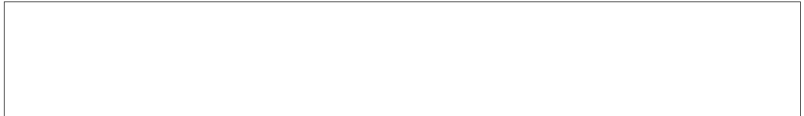
A ship was anchored. In addition to the regular train another train with 5 freight cars arrived at ~~about~~

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41. March 14, 1959. Soviet single engined biplane flew west to east at 1:00 hour. Ship was anchored at sea. The 13 car train and a train with 7 freight

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cars arrived at Astara at 11:00 hours.

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42. March 15, 1959. Soviet ship was anchored at sea. Train arrived as usual.

43. March 16, 1959. Ship was anchored at sea and train was as usual.

44. March 17, 1959. Ship was anchored at sea and train was as usual.

45. March 20, 1959. Ship was anchored at sea and train was as usual. At 7:10
a helicopter flew to Astara from ^{Lenkoran} ~~Lankaran~~ and returned.

46. March 23, 1959. A plane flew at 14:00 hours from west to east. Ship was
anchored at sea. Train arrived and departed as usual.

47. March 24, 1959. Ship was anchored at sea. Train arrived and departed as
usual.

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